



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Bureau of Land Management  
National Park Service  
Bureau of Indian Affairs

## Federal Subsistence Board

1101 E Tudor Rd, MS 121  
Anchorage Alaska 99503



# SUBSISTENCE FISHING

## SPECIAL ACTION

Under Authority of **50 CFR Part 100.10 and .19**  
**36 CFR Part 242.10 and .19**

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Special Action No.:	3-KS-06-15	Issued at:	Bethel, Alaska June 6, 2015
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Effective Date: June 10, 2015 12:01 a.m.

Expiration Date: June 30, 2015 11:59 p.m., unless superseded by subsequent Special Action

### EXPLANATION:

#### **COMMUNITY HARVEST PERMIT FOR CHINOOK SALMON SUBSISTENCE FISHING ON THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER**

This Emergency Special Action opens subsistence fishing for Chinook Salmon with a Federal Community Harvest Permit on the Kuskokwim River within the boundaries of Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. Federally qualified residents in the Kuskokwim River drainage and the coastal villages of Chefnak, Kipnuk, Kongiganak, and Kwigillingok are eligible to fish with a Community Harvest Permit. Permits will be issued by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Permits must be in the possession of the individual designated fisher(s) while fishing in this permit fishery. All permit conditions apply. This fishery is in response to requests and formal proposals submitted by the Kuskokwim River Intertribal Fish Commission.

### REGULATION

50 CFR 100.27(e)(4)(ii) is amended to add:

#### ***Unless superseded by subsequent Special Action***

*50 CFR 100.27 (e)(4)(ii) A gillnet fishery by Federal community harvest permit for the take of Chinook Salmon is open to Federally qualified users. Dates and harvest limits will be in*

*accordance with conditions outlined on the individual community permits (harvest limits will vary by community).*

*Chinook Salmon may be targeted using dip-nets, beach seines, fish wheels and gillnets. Gillnets are restricted to six-inch or less mesh, not exceeding 300-feet in length, and 45 meshes in depth and shall be drift net only. Fishers must be in possession of a permit and abide by the permit conditions while fishing. Permit fishing is only permitted in the Kuskokwim River and the Eek River and salmon tributaries of the Eek River. This permit is not valid on the Kwethluk, Kasigluk, Kisaralik, Tuluksak, and Aniak Rivers and their salmon tributaries.*

## JUSTIFICATION

### *Biological*

Due to the low Chinook Salmon returns over the last several years and the failure to meet escapement goals at two of three weir projects in 2014, conservation measures are warranted in 2015. The 2014 State of Alaska Chinook Salmon drainage-wide return was estimated at 136,000 fish, well below the annual average of 243,000 fish over the last 25 years. The subsistence harvest in 2014 was estimated to be 12,000 Chinook Salmon. While this was a historically low harvest, it was a significant harvest during this period of low Chinook Salmon abundance. The escapement for 2014 was estimated at 124,000 Chinook Salmon drainage-wide. The State of Alaska drainage-wide escapement goal is 65,000–120,000 Chinook Salmon, and the 2015 return is forecasted to be between 96,000 and 163,000 Chinook Salmon. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has a management objective targeting the upper end of the escapement goal range. The midpoint of the preseason forecast suggests a surplus of approximately 15,000 Chinook Salmon may be available in the 2015 subsistence season. We estimate that about 8,000 Chinook Salmon may be harvested incidentally in 2015 during fisheries targeting other species. The remaining potential surplus of 7,000 Chinook Salmon will provide a limited directed opportunity for Federally qualified residents on the Kuskokwim River drainage and the coastal villages of Chefnak, Kipnuk, Kongiganak, and Kwigillingok. This harvest is not anticipated to adversely impact efforts to reach our management objectives.

## FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD

By delegation to:

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Neil Lalonde, Refuge Manager  
Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge